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POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

of a terrible spiritual sterility painful to envisage. There was once a man who said, "*En art tout est faux qui n'est pas beau*"—a strong though noble dogmatism. Mr. Rodker is not of the opinion of M. France; he would say, "*En art tout est faux qui n'est pas sale*." It is the fashion of the day.

It pleases me to congratulate Mr. Flint on not following the fashion so perfectly congruous to Mr. Rodker's intelligence.
Richard Aldington

THREE POETS OF THREE NATIONS

Messines and Other Poems, by Emile Cammaerts, with English translations by Tita Brand-Cammaerts. John Lane Co.

Reading Cammaerts, one has in mind Verhaeren. But the sombre Verhaeren, with his heart of rumbling machine, has become smiling—vaguely and sentimentally smiling, telling us a tale which we can't believe. Yes, in Belgium, besides the tempest and the earthquake that were Verhaeren, one imagined, and asked for, the serenity and peace and smile that are over all the countries in the world. But the smile and serenity that came are rather fit to soothe children than to satisfy our desire.

However, one cannot deny that some of these sweet words are actually sweet:

Du linge, sur une corde, au bout du jardin,
Bat de l'aile dans la brise rieuse.

Three Poets of Three Nations

Je crois en ce brin d'herbe qui pousse sur mon abri. . . .
. . . . Je crois ce que je vois.

It is obvious that Cammaerts strives towards the simple wistfulness of the folk-song and the startling naiveté of the modern; but his naiveté lacks subtlety and his song is too light ever to resemble folk-song.

Life Immovable, by Kostas Palamas; translated by A. E. Phoutrides. Harvard University Press.

Kostas Palamas is—so an American-Greek professor and a French critic assure us—"incontestably the greatest" European poet of these days. To call anyone "the greatest poet," without telling us just how great, is a miserable stunt of poor criticism. Well, how great?

We are helpless too. We can't say. The translator has put a mask on his face—not a cheap mask, but incontestably a mask. "Evil demons seized my all," "My frame is bent," "thrice-beautiful," "thrice-happy," "thrice-wonderful," "magic beauty's charms"—if these be features of a face, the face is certainly not that of the greatest poet. But we perceive that a mask is on it: for even in the translation Kostas Palamas' size can be guessed by the *quantity* of his poetry: descriptions are minute to the tiniest particular, and symbols are presented to the faintest line of their contours. One may not, however, call these descriptions startling or exact, because the language of the translator is not such; and, for the same reason, one may not call these symbols real. A gorgeous symbolism which, in order to succeed, demands the full strength and precision of pure words, is